

**MILLSTONE TOWNSHIP
OPEN SPACE & FARMLAND PRESERVATION COUNCIL
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, July 23, 2009**

At 7:35 pm, Ms. Butch called the meeting to order.

The Secretary read the Adequate Notice.

Roll Call

Present: (7) Blanco, Butch, Denardo, Kau, Kuczinski (7:37 pm), Schloss (7:39 pm), Siedman
Absent: (4) Alves, Asprocolas, Morelli, Romano

Public Comment

The public comment portion of the meeting was opened at 7:36 pm and with no public comment was closed at 7:36 pm.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Ms. Siedman with a second offered by Mr. Kau to approve the June 25, 2009, minutes. Roll call vote:

Ayes (3) Siedman, Kau, Butch

Nays (0)

Correspondence/News Releases

- ***NJ Conservation Foundation*** dated 6/30/09 re: Land Preservation Success Stories; distributed for review.

- ***Conservation Easement Permanence and the Role of Municipalities*** article from the December 2008 edition for *New Jersey Municipalities*; distributed for review.

Old Business

- ***Trails***
 - **Industrial Park:** Nothing new to report; still with attorneys.
 - **County Road crossing on Agress Road**
 - The County is working to install signage for trail users to read before they enter the road crossing.
 - Once the signs are installed, the ribbons will come down and the trail will be officially opened.

- ***Trail Grant Work***
 - Grant work is progressing on the orchard buffer trail located off of Perrineville Road.
 - Most of the clearing work has been completed; markers and signs need to be installed.
 - The trail will connect to Fairplay Road and into Perrineville Lake Park.

- ***Impact of Inclusionary Element on COAH Objection***
 - Council members reviewed the draft memo to the Township Committee expressing opposition to the inclusionary element on the COAH objection.

- A motion was made by Ms. Siedman with a second offered by Mr. Kau to send the letter to the Township Committee; Roll call vote:
Ayes (7): Siedman, Kau, Blanco, Butch, Denardo, Kuczinski, Schloss
Nays (0)

➤ **SADC Trail Subcommittee**

- Nothing new to report; will be a slow process.

New Business

➤ **Termination of County Lease for USDA**

- Mayor Grbelja sent out an email explaining repercussions of the lease termination at the County Ag Building in Freehold and requesting people to contact Freeholders to request renewal of the lease.
- Offices affected by the lease termination include the US Department of Agriculture, Farm Service Agency, Natural Resources Conservation Service and the NJ Soil Conservation District; these offices service Monmouth, Middlesex and Mercer Counties.
- The Agriculture Building was built to house agriculture offices to accommodate farmers with a centralized location for the various offices. Monmouth County ranks third in the State for agriculture production and terminating the lease would cause a hardship for farmers, who would need to travel to Burlington County to access the USDA offices.
- Ms. Butch attended the Freeholder Workshop earlier today to speak out against the lease termination. There is a Freeholder meeting in Marlboro this evening and farmers were asked to attend the meeting to voice opposition to the lease termination.
- Reasons for the lease termination include utilizing the space for County education, court and social services offices.

➤ **Termination of Hunting on Township Open Space** – Council members discussed various issues related to hunting in the Township. Hunting is a necessary and cost effective deer management control. Overpopulation of deer causes damage to crops and residential landscapes and deer are responsible for numerous traffic accidents that cause injury and property damage. Within Millstone Township, there are thousands of acres owned by the State and hundreds of acres owned by the County that are open to hunting with on-site hunting supervision and regulation enforcement. Township farmers and landowners also hunt on privately held land during the hunting season and with special permits during the off season. Council members feel strongly that hunting on Township-owned property should not be permitted for the following reasons:

- **Proximity to residential development**
 - Township-owned properties are relatively small and are surrounded by dense residential development.
 - Township-owned property boundaries are difficult to determine which can lead to conflicts between hunters and residents.
- **Public Safety**
 - Residents who live in developments adjacent to Township open space properties have complained about hunters trespassing on private property, hunting too close to occupied buildings and have voiced concerns about the safety of children playing in backyards.
 - The Township does not have rangers or a police department to enforce hunting regulations.

- Changes to State hunting regulations for Township-owned property, such as maintaining a 450 foot perimeter around an occupied building and not permitting hunting on Sundays, would be confusing and difficult to enforce.
 - **Public Access**
 - Residents want access to public open space without concern of being shot which has been documented by petitions against recent changes to State hunting regulations.
 - State and County owned land within the Township that is actively used for hunting is not as actively used by non-hunters.
 - The consensus of the Council is that hunting should not be permitted on Township-owned property.
- **Farm Leases on Township-owned Open Space**
 - There was a resolution on the 7/15/09 Township Committee agenda for renewal of the Lee Farm lease. The resolution appeared prematurely and was pulled from the agenda.
 - The Agricultural Advisory Council will work with the Township Committee to review the lease. The resolution will most likely appear on the August 5th Township Committee agenda.
- **Capital-to-Coast Bike Trail**
 - The Environmental Commission has expressed interest in the trail.
 - Ms. Butch attended an EC meeting and explained that a proposed joint workshop meeting with the Open Space Council was discussed.
 - Ms. Butch acquired permission from the Township Committee for the Township Engineer to attend the joint workshop.
 - Ms. Butch asked if any Council members are interested in attending a joint meeting. Email notification will be sent to Council members when the meeting time and place are established.

Events

- **Possible Open House at Remarkable Sites:** Nothing to report; Ms. Schloss plans to meet with the Hightstown Historical Society on Friday, July 25, and will provide an update next month.
- **Clambake 2009**
 - The final financial report was distributed for review; a copy was also sent to Mr. Wingerter.
 - This year's fundraiser surpassed last year's event.
 - Ms. Butch thanked Ms. Siedman for chairing the fundraiser.
- **Millstone Day 2009**
 - Sunday, September 13th, at Frogbridge Day Camp from noon to 5 pm.
 - **Inflatable attractions**
 - Ms. Butch attended the July Recreation Commission meeting and inquired about the Frogbridge inflatable attractions; she received an email response that they are willing to share the inflatables with direction to contact the Rec Commission Secretary for details.
 - Ms. Maher spoke with Ms. Vladimirov who explained the fee for the rental and staff to operate will be approximately \$2,100.00; the

- Rec Commission intends to charge a nominal fee; they are not utilizing the inflatable attractions for fundraising purposes.
 - The Open Space Council goals are not consistent with those of the Rec Commission.
 - The Rec Commission will discuss renting the inflatable attractions at their August 3 meeting, after which more information will be available.
 - *Miss New Jersey Appearance*
 - The fee for the appearance is \$400.00, payable to the Miss New Jersey Education Foundation. The fee would be split evenly between the OSFP and Ag Councils. If the Open Space Council is not interested in sponsoring the appearance, the Ag Council may sponsor the appearance on its own.
 - Council concerns include incurring a cost without any benefit and the connection of the appearance to the Open Space Council. Council members agreed not to sponsor the appearance.
 - *Mechanical Bull*
 - Issues regarding State regulations and the mechanical bull ride were discussed.
 - Mr. Denardo will contact Mr. Wingerter and will investigate registration of the bull ride.
 - If the bull ride cannot be registered and inspected in time for Millstone Day, the Council will only have an information table and will prepare a big thank-you card to be given to the owners of Frogbridge that residents and children can sign.
- ***Pleasure Pace***
 - Scheduled for Sunday, September 27th.
 - The start time is 8:00 am.
 - The Township attorneys have approved the release form.
 - The Open Space Council is co-sponsoring the event but has no financial obligation. Money raised from the event will go back into clearing, marking and improving trails.
 - Lynda Martin, of the Trailblazers, contacted the Secretary and requested contact information for all horse farms in the Township which will be used for a Pleasure Pace flyer mailing.
 - The ride is not restricted to Township residents.
 - The planning committee has contacted the State Police regarding the route and is awaiting their recommendations regarding road crossings.

Committee Reports

- ***Finance/Open Space Trust:*** The Open Space Trust account activity through June was distributed for review.
- ***Preservation Signage:*** Nothing to report.
- ***Public Relations/Publications:*** If there is a bond referendum question on the November ballot, a newsletter will be prepared for October distribution.
- ***Legislative Awareness:*** Nothing reported due to Mr. Romano's absence.

➤ **Stewardship**

- Expenses have been incurred for surveying and marking of Township-owned property.
- Ms. Butch asked Council members if the surveying and marking expenses should be paid out of the Open Space Trust tax levy or from money raised through fundraisers.
- Surveying costs are usually part of the acquisitions costs and it was agreed that the stewardship surveying costs would come out of the Open Space Trust tax levy.
- A motion was made by Mr. Kuczinski with a second offered by Mr. Kau to utilize the Open Space Trust tax levy to pay for surveying and marking expenses on Township-owned open space properties. Roll call vote: Ayes (7): Kuczinski, Kau, Blanco, Butch, Denardo, Schloss, Siedman Nays (0)

➤ **Watershed Committee Liaison:** A meeting has not been held; nothing to report.

➤ **Recreation Planning Committee**

- The Committee hasn't met; Ms. Butch will follow-up regarding the date of the next meeting.
- Terms of the Lee property lease need to be reviewed.

➤ **Review Planning Board and Board of Adjustment Applications**

- D. Morgan Tracey/353 Sweetmans Lane, LLC: anticipated to be heard by the BoA in August.
- CKV Realty (Garden Center) Burnt Tavern Road: will be coming back to the BoA soon.

At 8:47 pm, a motion was made by Mr. Kau with a second offered by Mr. Denardo and by unanimous vote the Council moved to executive session.

At 9:40 pm, the Council returned to regular session. Ms. Butch explained that some Council members have had picture identification badges made up at the municipal building and that all members should make an appointment to have badges made. The badges should be carried when on property site visits.

Having no further business to discuss, a motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Blanco with a second offered by Ms. Siedman and by unanimous vote the meeting adjourned at 9:41 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Lorraine Maher